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THE MIDDLE TEN

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BY

F. F. MURRAY

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PREFACE.

For whatever these pages contain which may be considered crude, disconnected or undignified, the writer has no excuse to offer; but if anything is found in them suggestive of ill will, the reader is assured that it was not written in that spirit. On the contrary, the governing motive was an ambition to write something which might stimulate the spirit of friendly co-operation among those who should read it—particularly among the people of the Pennsylvania oil regions.

F. F. M.

PLUM, PA.

THE MIDDLE TEN.

THE informal organization, partly literary and partly social, which had come to bear the above name, was not so designated through limitation of its membership to the number indicated,—for it had several times that number,—but because of the trend of its sentiments with reference to questions of the day. It was an association of people drawn together through casual discussions and a mutual tendency toward points of common agreement in social beliefs and theories. One of these points was that in considering such questions it is a mistake to divide mankind into simply two classes—The Upper Ten and The Lower Ten; that a larger body than either, including all that is best in both, is The Middle Ten, excluding at the one extreme the kind of humanity classing itself as finer and more sacred clay solely by virtue of the size of its pocket-book, and at the other extreme the class seemingly imbued with the conviction of its having been created

especially for the purpose of sticking closely to the beer centres, loafing, breeding and railing at all existing governments and institutions.

This great Middle Ten, as viewed by its namesake, embraced the brawn and sinew, the intelligence and genius of the world. It did all the work, made all the advances in mental, physical and material developments, paid not only its own debts but the debts of all others as well, and carried in addition to its own responsibilities the loads it suffered to be imposed upon it by the two extremes. Unfortunately these extremes were increasing the responsibilities of The Middle Ten with much rapidity and at the same time were as rapidly decreasing the means for discharging such responsibilities. Behind the man earning a dollar lurked an increasing number of schemers, thugs and tramps and in front of him, grown greedier and more powerful with every industry wrecked and every dollar squeezed into their tills, stood the modern pirates of land and sea—the monopolies and trusts.

Now, it was evident that with all the brawn and sinew and intelligence and genius indicated there was something wrong with the great middle division. Its people lived in a land of well nigh unlimited resources —were part of a nation in which single states were larger than some of the most powerful countries of the

Old World. The inventive mind had never wrought such wonderful things in any age or land as their own. Their form of government was one in which all classes of men shared equally the right of suffrage. There was little, if anything, essential to their prosperity and happiness for which they need depend on any other land. Yet with all their possessions, advantages and possibilities they were as scrambling paupers compared with what they might be. In the midst of apparent prosperity they would be plunged into failures, suspensions and the general woes of bankruptcy.

The trouble was not far to seek. It was but the breaking out, under modern conditions, of the heritage of disordered blood—the old poison of individual selfishness and inconsiderateness. With a knowledge as certain as the fact of their own existence they knew their life, at longest, would quickly be run; they knew that all the world possesses of peace and order and common happiness it owes to the application of the principle of co-operation and enlarging mutualities—fought against by existing powers through all stages of human existence from primal savagery down to their own time; and yet with this knowledge at their command every further illustration of the wisdom of pulling together with the energy wasted in pulling apart they accepted only under protest and when forced upon them by their

own self-punishing inconsiderateness and shortsightedness.

Only once in a while would it occur to them, in a general way, that there was anything wrong in a system in which every man's hand was raised against every other hand in the personal conquest of wealth, and which excused itself by affecting to believe, in effect, that, sometime—some way—every individual could acquire and hold a limitless number of times as much as every other individual without causing any special disturbance of the system. Sometimes the sweeping way in which the master spirits of selfishness would gather in, so to speak, everything in sight, including the possessions of some of the more advanced advocates and defenders of the system, who had worked well along toward the head of the general line of grabbers before the shrewder ones had put in an appearance, would cause sporadic protests and stimulate the hunting for scapegoats.

Most frequently the scapegoat selected was either the question of tariff or finance—as if it made any material difference whether the powers controlling the great channels of commerce and industry took in the profits with their right hand or with their left; whether it made any permanent difference what tariff or financial system prevailed if the industrial and commercial

systems remained unchanged. With charming innocence the people generally absolved themselves from all blame for the periodical and inevitable recoils in the operation of their old and much treasured system—floundered from one existing party to another and organized new ones with no better results. Hundreds of millions of over capitalized stock, in the hands of incapable imitators of the masters of inflation and contraction, would suddenly collapse and vanish, and the people who were treasuring and making more dangerous the system of which such panic-causing collapses were but natural fruits, would despairingly view the wrecked banks and industries, multiplied mortgages, suicides, riots and a host of kindred manifestations, and then, blaming in varying degrees everybody but themselves, would wonder why their beautiful system of industrial and commercial brotherhood should suffer such painful and demoralizing revulsions.

Some of them very philosophically looked upon these recurring collapses as visitations directed by an inscrutable Providence and to be borne with unquestioning and uncomplaining resignation—like the parental fatalists who inconsiderately expose their offspring to cold, hunger and disease, and complacently ascribe the speedy death of the little ones to the will of God!

The Middle Ten Club, in the course of its consid-

eration and discussion of the conditions touched by these comments, decided to offer prizes for the story, essay or poem which should best express the sentiments of the club and should also offer such suggestions as might at least draw better ones from other sources. The chief paper contributed, with extracts from others, is given in the following pages—accompanied by the wish that the reader may find something in them to suggest better ones along the same lines.

THE ANTI-TRUST COMPANY.

CHAPTER I.

THE people of Martinville were much the same as those of any village of the agricultural regions of the Middle States. The residents of the hamlet proper did not number 200, all told, but there was a tributary population of several times that number made up of people who received their mail at the village, and who were catalogued as residents of the place by people similarly associated with other villages of the region. As a rule they were worthy people who earned their living by the sweat of their brow. If the pioneer spirit had given way largely to the spirit of self-interest, as in the more populous communities, there still remained a good deal of the ancestral feeling of brotherhood.

Their faith in humanity, and their natural disposition to consider other people as honest as themselves until proven otherwise, had often been imposed upon and betrayed by politicians and others of oily speech and pleasing manners. In many ways—in politics, business

and various organizations—this faith in the better part human nature had been shaken, but it had not been destroyed. Their reading of political trickery and corruption and their own contact with such had bred to some extent local imitators. Thus in the population there was a sprinkling of those who had become schooled in the vice of politics—had learned to put a cash value on their votes and those of others, and had come to regard a candidate as an individual having money of his own or of other people to be used corruptly, and who was therefore as legitimate a thing to be robbed as the nest of a hawk.

This class was small as compared with the rest, but it was there and was growing. Another class was made up of those who had grown so disgusted with politics, and the seeming futility of individual effort to secure a fair deal either at the primaries or general elections, that they rarely went to the polls except in campaigns of special interest and enthusiasm. This class was also growing and party lines generally had become weak.

But back of the poor faith in any immediate change in the course of political corruption and the growing power of monopolies and trusts, there was hope for the future and the spirit of a willingness to assist in any movement which promised a betterment of existing conditions. Many of such movements, in which they

had joined, had been tried and found wanting. Parties had been swept into power through monumental majorities of approval, and had been swept out again on tidal waves of repudiation. All this had been to little purpose except to show that such efforts were insufficient. For the monopolies and combines, against which these efforts were chiefly directed, there always remained loopholes through which they might escape and continue their methods by the liberal use of the symbol of the time, the god of the age—the Almighty Dollar. It had become the most potent of all things and the manner of its acquisition was no bar to its power. From the poorest and most ignorant voters to scholarly officials in high places—through all the avenues of social and business intercourse, politics, legislation and the administration of the laws—it had become the one thing needful. Not a denomination was there in the land in which churches were not to be found where even the ministers toaded to it, with little regard as to how it had been obtained. The so-called "business" age had become such with a vengeance, and the spirit of it had crystalized into this motto :

"Get there—and don't get caught at it."

CHAPTER II.

NATURALLY there was plenty of discussion, formal and informal, among the villagers and their tributary neighbors as to the cause of this state of affairs and its ultimate effect in the event of its failing to receive the application of proper remedies. In this consideration of existing conditions the general sentiment of the people was largely in favor of reform—mostly of other people, but with the encouraging seasoning of a willingness to take some of the blame themselves. During the spring, summer and early fall such discussion was necessarily curtailed by other matters requiring more immediate attention, involving the act of beating the sun up by a good margin and working till dark or later. There was no monopoly in this kind of work, and it took a good deal of it to afford sufficient provisions for winter, with enough additional to provide clothing, groceries, etc., and the wherewithal to meet the demands of the tax collectors. The work by no means ended with the tilling of the soil, the cultivation of the crops and the harvesting of the same. There was the neces-

sity for more of it—teaming, peddling, work in the woods and other kinds of employment which would help to make up the deficit so often found when the balance was struck in the accounts of the farm for the season. But the winter brought for all more unemployed hours, voluntary or enforced. There was more time for little gatherings of various kinds and discussions grew accordingly. They cropped out at the usual village gatherings, were transferred to the literary and debating societies and subsequently received scattering treatment wherever a group might form.

Such a group, numbering half a dozen persons, was assembled one evening at the shoe shop of Christopher Hudson. The name of Hudson was not one which was to be found in Winks' "Lives of Illustrious Shoemakers," but he was a worthy individual—a worker in his fields in the summer, in his shop in the winter, and in all seasons an honest man, a student of nature and of books, and a modest philosopher. He was included with the class mentioned as having become a good deal disgusted with politics and elections, and when they came under discussion they caused him to speak with more spirit than on any other subject. They were in his mind the evening in question, and as he laid aside a piece of work he had completed he stepped over to a lounge in the room and took a position partly of meditation and partly of rest.

He was thus situated when the group already mentioned came in. The conversation was soon turned to the subjects which Hudson had been thinking about before the visitors came, and presently he said:

"We have done a good deal of theorizing in this way and that, a good deal of voting, and millions of other people have done the same thing with the same object in view, but the monopolies we have talked so much about and voted so much about keep on growing just the same, and the most of us, acting on the same principle we blame in others, keep on helping them to grow. I now move that we proceed to settle this matter on a business basis. Let me read you some things I have jotted down."

He then went over to his bench, drew some manuscript from a drawer beneath and read as follows:

"WHEREAS, This age has become so full of so-called business that there is little room in it for anything else, nothing in particular being thought of but the quickest 'business' methods of getting hold of the dollar somebody else has earned, and

"WHEREAS, This making of the dollar the chief goal of all human efforts and ambitions—in which we all have helped—has changed competition into absorption, individuals into monopolies and monopolies into trusts, and

"WHEREAS, These trusts are now in full control of the business of the country, and having in control the industrial and financial interests are closing in on the land, and

"WHEREAS, Legislation seems powerless to change this order of things and nothing will do but to hurry this artificial business and monopoly idea to a speedy conclusion; therefore be it

"*Resolved*, That a company of the people be formed to be known as the Anti-Trust Company, its membership to be open to all citizens of the United States, their wives, their sons and daughters; and be it further

"*Resolved*, That the company proceed to acquire whatever may be necessary to abolish all private monopolies."

As Hudson concluded Philip Warner, feigning that the preamble and resolutions had killed him on the spot, fell off the bench on which he had been sitting and in so doing upset the tub in which Hudson soaked his leather. The mishap checked the spirit of his hilarity somewhat and he only said:

"Well, there's no reasonable ground for saying you've not been liberal enough there in the 'whereas' line, but what's the use in other ways of making two bites of a cherry? I move to amend by striking out the words 'United States' and substituting 'The Solar System.'"

"Is that all?" asked Hudson. "I didn't expect to get off with such a light sentence, for I am in earnest in what I have said and read. I mean every word of it. Listen to me a little while. We can start here to-night a company that can grow into millions, both in membership and money, until it absorbs every monopoly in this country. We can bring this about peacefully and without doing anybody any wrong.

"It would be better if it could be done by the enforcement of the laws we now have or others that might be enacted. But experience has demonstrated that we are all too selfish—that money and monopoly have now too firm a grip on the laws, the law makers and the administration of the law, the press, the pulpit and hundreds of organizations—to permit this to be done. The balance of the power is with the dollar and it must be made the medium by which to win. It matters not to the masters we have helped to create—the monopolists—of what we make an issue if in our growing greed and blindness we leave undisturbed the principle that some grades of robbery are more legal than others, and that in the name of business we may justify in individuals—in ourselves—the same principle we curse in combinations of individuals and in the operation of monster combines.

"We may take a stand with either of the great parties

and we will find monopolists right with us on party issues and liberal in their contributions to the campaign funds. They will encourage us in any move in the line of patriotism. They and their political servants will swing right into line, help us celebrate the Fourth, raise flags and deliver speeches full of patriotic—words. We can have all the monopoly of party or patriotism we want, if we let alone the trust methods of rounding up the dollar. People may start Christian associations, universities and missionary organizations, and the biggest monopolists in the country will not only stand by them with contributions and endowments but will offer up seemingly soulful prayers for the success of such undertakings.

"In anything that tends toward laying up treasures in heaven they are with the advocates of such, but as for any regulation of treasures here on earth, they will attend to that themselves. The line is drawn at the dollar. There are more people in the country than ever before with the sentiment of fair play guiding them; more of the right feeling towards others; more means of enlightenment—more of all the things which should mark the progress of the human mind and heart. But stalking right along with these things of progress is the tyrant of Greed, heartless and relentless—its appetite ever growing and unsatisfied. The very things

which should be used for the benefit of all it uses as instruments of cruelty and oppression. The things which should be used to lighten labor it uses to place a heavier burden upon it. It fattens on calamity; on "corners" of the necessaries of life; on pestilence even and famine. Its god is the dollar, and its chief instruments now the monopolies and trusts, and the private possessions of rights surrendered by the public. So long as we do not touch the vital thing, the dollar, it can afford to encourage us in all our efforts. It is the old illustration of the way we work the bees.

"It is the use of power—in our case the power of monopoly—a thing created and fostered by the people themselves, for we have all become monopolists in varying degrees, as I have said, and the big ones who now practically control the business of the country are simply the ones on the top of the heap. As long as the system remains they will be found there, or other bigger ones, even more greedy, and more typical of the so-called business spirit of the age. I now propose that we go at this issue on a 'business' basis. If nothing will do the age but to have this monopoly idea go on—that in the name of business, people must either rob or be robbed—then let us go ahead with the formation of a company to be a monopoly of the people; whose possessions will be the common property of the com-

pany; in which membership will be open to everybody; a company which will not interfere with individual rights and individual industry, but will encourage and protect both by wiping out every monopoly in the country and every form of monopoly having the Almighty Dollar for its basis. When we have accomplished this—when all the people of the country but its would-be financial, commercial and industrial controllers are members of our company and working in harmony with it—we may then, if the members desire, turn the company's possessions over to the government, for by that time the company will be the government, though the government will not be the company, and we will have controlled the monopolies and trusts, and proportionately controlled ourselves, without government ownership in any branch of the undertaking."

When Hudson finished speaking his little audience was yet in a listening attitude. There had been some laughing when he began, but his spirit of earnestness and the novelty of his proposition had commanded their attention.

"Well," said Warner, "when you come to think it over, and get down to the bed rock facts, about the only thing that beats a dollar is more than a dollar, and that's the meat, as I take it, of this plan Chris has been working on."

"That's the idea," said Hudson; "that and the idea of co-operation."

"Of course," added Warner, "the way times are some of us are not in shape to shoulder a very large railroad and carry it to Uncle Sam. Have we seven dollars in clean cash in the crowd to-night?"

"Whether we have seven dollars or seven cents," said Hudson, speaking to Warner as to a slightly wayward but well meaning boy, "does not effect the principle of the plan I have proposed. There was a time when not a monopoly of to-day existed. They all grew, gathering force as they grew and increasing their power to grow. There was a time when this country had not a white inhabitant; a time when every church that exists to-day had not a member—not even an existence; when every government that now exists was nothing. All things have had a beginning—all had to grow. I repeat that we can start here to-night a company that, growing slowly at first and then rapidly, can acquire control and ownership of every business it needs to acquire in order to give the people a square deal."

To this statement Warner banteringly responded:

"I don't want to seem to be standing in the way of progress. Like some of the rest of you, probably, I came away without my pocketbook, but here's a nickel I'm willing the new company should take to invest to suit itself and keep the change."

"Very well," replied Hudson. "Now, suppose that the 80,000,000 people—at this time the population of the United States—in this country would agree to do what you have just proposed—contribute five cents each to the common funds of a company to which they would all belong. Figure for yourself what the aggregate amount of their contributions would be. Suppose they would agree to pay ten cents a month for one year to such a fund. Why, at the end of that time it would amount to nearly one hundred millions of dollars!"

"It's reasonable enough," said Warner, "that if enough people would go into a company like that, and would agree, they could make something move. But would enough of them go into it and stay by it? That's the question. If they can pull together in a company of that kind, why haven't they formed one before this time?"

"Answer that question with your own experience,—the experience of all of us," said Hudson. "Why have we not been more interested in organizations of that tendency? Chiefly because we have looked upon them as local in their character, or as never likely to yield enough to go around in the matter of dividends, or as things concerning other sections of the country more than ours. That has been our logic, yet in spite of such logic we have found ourselves seeking the advancement

of self-interest in numbers—by identifying ourselves with organizations more or less co-operative in their principles.

"This spirit of co-operation only fails when it is crowded out by the very spirit that has created all the trusts and combines—the spirit of selfishness, and with it the expectation of too much in direct personal returns. In our company there will be no personal dividends—no individual division of what it possesses. All its interests will be possessions in common—a standing army of dollars and industrial and business interests, to be used for peace, order and fair play wherever any commercial disturbances occur or are attempted."

"And suppose," said Warner, "such a company could be organized and carried as far as you would have it,—what then? What would the conditions be? What things would the company do and what would it leave to be done by the people individually?"

"The conditions would be like this," said Hudson, "The individual would be free to follow any vocation he desired, so long as he followed it on the natural principles of honesty, thrift and economy. The company would in no way interfere with his rights, but on the contrary would protect them. Whatever the individual could do best, and without injustice to his fellow men, he would be free to do; whatever he could

not or would not do in this way would be done by the company. There would be but one monopoly and that would be a monopoly of the people. The rough resolutions read were just jotted down to introduce the subject, but I have in mind a constitution and by-laws I can go ahead and finish. Come around a week from to-night and I will submit what I have prepared. In the meantime talk the idea over wherever it will do the most good. I also move that in the meantime we consider ourselves informally organized as the Anti-Trust Company of the United States."

The motion was carried unanimously and soon afterward the group separated for the night.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN the evening arrived for the formation of the new company Hudson's shoe shop was soon well filled—so well it was evident that if the next meeting had a proportionate increase in attendance it would have to be held in larger quarters. Warner was the first to bring up the special subject which had brought them together. He said:

"There are a good many ways of looking at this thing, I find. For instance, Chris made the statement the other night that if eighty millions of people would contribute ten cents a month for one year to some fund, it would amount to nearly one hundred millions of dollars at the end of that time. Well, just reverse the thing. Say that a company had piled up that amount of money, and had it to distribute monthly to its members, sprinkling it along through a year. You see it would only amount to ten cents a month in a membership of eighty millions, and it would be as much as it was worth to distribute it. I can't see how the thing's going to work. There won't be enough to go 'round.

Every man who goes into the thing will expect to draw out more than he puts in, and that, of course, won't work. Nearly every member, too, who would contribute anything to the company would expect a good fat job in connection with the thing, and of course there wouldn't be jobs enough of that kind to go 'round—or jobs enough of any kind, for that matter. I have turned this thing over in quite a number of ways since last week, and I'm sorry but free to say there are too many ways in which such a concern is bound to bust."

"Natural enough conclusions," said Hudson, "if you look at the company in that light, but that is not the way to look at it. First and foremost, it is to be remembered, as I said the other night, no direct dividend is to be made to anybody—not a cent. Nobody is to expect anything in direct dividends, but in general benefits. It will be the same as though we contributed to a fund to provide means and methods for the stamping out of an epidemic of disease in some locality and thus prevent it from spreading over the country. We would expect no return for any contributions in that case but the satisfaction of helping those more afflicted than ourselves and at the same time preserving our own health—in other words, preserving the ability to earn other dividends. So it will be with our company—in wiping out a monopoly in any region it will be

benefitting the whole country, though the first and direct benefits will come to the region where its grip is felt the most—just as in the case of the epidemic the benefits would come first to those most in need. As for everybody expecting a job, easy or otherwise, in connection with the business of our company—or monopoly—how is it with us now?

"Are we not all making contributions—forced contributions at that—to monopolies and trusts, and do we expect them to give us all employment? We do not. Rather than employment from them what we want is fair play—the opportunity to be failures or successes according to our individual merits and not according to our adaptability to the uses, good, bad or indifferent, of some monopoly or trust. To bring this about will be the object of our company, for it will not check but stimulate individual industry, and will only monopolize for all that which is sought to be monopolized for the few. It would be socialistic and productive of too much strong government and paternalism, the objectors would say, if the government were to attempt to accomplish this. As we can afford to be liberal we grant them this, and, without any connection with the government, proceed to fight them with the one great weapon of their own—combination. The many unlawful weapons they have used we do not need.

"Granting them every argument they use in attempting to justify their methods, we will make the very principle on which they have been built work also their downfall. As a competing company, without any connection with the government, and simply carrying out one principle of the 'business' age, our company will proceed to beat them at their own game —monopolize them all. Let me now submit the outline of a constitution and by-laws I have prepared."

Hudson then proceeded with the reading of the same, of which this is a summary: The company to be known, as already indicated, as the Anti-Trust Company and to be incorporated as such in every state in the union; to constitute in effect a national organization, extending down through state, county, city, borough and township organizations to the members of the company—the people; in case of its dissolution, from any cause whatsoever, all its possessions to be forfeited to the government; the business of the company to be done through executive boards; the township, borough and city members to elect their respective boards; representatives from each of these to elect the county boards; the county boards in turn to elect the state boards and the state boards the national board; the national board to hold in trust all the possessions of the company and to consist of one representative from

each state, there now being no territories in the union; no dividends to be paid by the company to its members beyond payment for services, the redemption of stock or other obligations issued in raising funds, and such redemption to be voluntary; the local executive boards to select their own place of meeting; the headquarters of the county boards to be at the county seats, the state boards at the state capitals and the national board at Washington, thus providing for convenience in case of making a Christmas gift of the possessions of the company to the government.

These were the chief points read by Hudson, and after some discussion it was agreed that they afforded a sufficient ground work of principles on which to make a start—that more might be added when the general formation of the company took place.

The matter of the salary of officers moved to the surface in the discussion. It was correctly inferred it would come up promptly in connection with any discussion of the plan in other places and it therefore might be left, with other matters, to regulate itself in the representative general conventions which should be held before the company passed from the formative period and settled down to business. In the meantime there should be no salaries and the funds obtained by voluntary contributions should be used in the work of organization.

Warner now remarked that he still had that nickel with him—that there might be others, and that before any got away it might be well to organize. This brought comments more earnest, and directly a temporary organization was formed by the election of an executive board of three for the township, one of whom was Hudson, who was made president of the board. An assessment of five cents was levied on each of the members of the newly formed company,—twenty in all —which was paid, and the fund for controlling and absorbing the monopolies of the country had one dollar to its credit for a start. There was a willingness to make the fund several dollars instead of one, but Hudson expressed the wish that it should start with the Alpha and Omega of the business age—the Dollar. It was decided to hold the next meeting two weeks thence at the village hall, and in the meantime each of the twenty members should consider himself a committee of one to bring in as many members as he could "without regard to race, creed, color or previous condition of servitude." The meeting then adjourned.

CHAPTER IV.

THE twenty members proceeded with due diligence to set forth to their acquaintances the aims and merits of the new company, so that the first formal meeting at the village hall brought the membership up to more than 100, with the assurance of as many more by proxy, and the prospect that within a comparatively short period it would take in the whole township. No regular programme had been prepared for the evening, but the assemblage did not lack for those who could execute a song or recitation, or otherwise afford entertainment, and the first part of the evening was passed in diversions of that kind—or as the reporters sometimes say, "an enjoyable time was had." Then Hudson took charge of the meeting and briefly explained what had been done and what it was the aim of the company to do. He explained that the officers chosen at the previous meeting were elected only temporarily and might now be changed or continued until the membership in the company had more thoroughly covered the township. The latter course was adopted.

Hudson then presented a circular he had had printed. After defining the purposes of the company the latter said :

"The first and main thing to be done is to enroll the public as members of the company. The most systematic way to do this will be by election districts. You are therefore urged to form an organization in your district to be known as the Anti-Trust Company and persuade as many people as you can, and as soon as you can, to become members of it. Industrial and agricultural organizations of all kinds and societies of every description are urged to take up the work of enrolling members in the new company and hasten it to completion. We are sure that in a comparatively short time it will have a stupendous growth, as the principle of it passes all lines of political, social or religious distinction, and the successful operation of it will work no wrong to any man, woman or child. Moreover the individual expense and effort necessary to put it in operation will be so small as to be hardly worth mentioning. Go ahead with the forming of a board and the enrolling of members in your district, and when these local organizations have been made all over the country the state and national boards will be formed and the company will be ready to go to work.

"It may be said that if the people of every election

district in the land were formed into an anti-trust company, and would withhold their patronage and support from the trusts and their servants, there would be no need of going further. Temporarily that would be the result, but permanently it would not. The object of this company will be to protect us from our own selfishness as well as the selfishness of others. There are many things being done by all of us under protest—in a spirit of 'I won't if you won't,' and vice versa; there are thousands of lawmakers whose impulses are right, but who are practically forced by the spirit of the age—by the people themselves—into submission to the political machines and commercial combines; there are thousands of editors whose hearts are in the right place who have been forced into silence by these combines, assisted by the people; there are thousands of ministers, who, whatever the impressions their silence may convey, are smarting under more or less submission to this commercial spirit.

"In all classes and vocations this condition is deplored but is submitted to, in many cases, as a matter of bread and butter. Everywhere is the spirit to shake it off, but mixed with it is the spirit of selfishness—individual selfishness and a distrust that others may take advantage of any suppression of that selfishness. You must have a combination of people in which each can

feel assured that there will be no monopoly but that which will operate for the benefit of all, and will not be subject to the fluctuations of suspicion and lack of faith. Such will be our company. Under its operation the law-maker may speak for the welfare of his constituents without any fear of monopolists or political bosses, for his constituents will be united against such combines.

"It will be the same with the courts, the churches, the newspapers and every other agency that resents organized greed but cannot shake it off. Go to work at once and organize a local branch of the company in your district. Make a start, if it is with no more than half a dozen members. To establish means of communication and help along the work of organization, voluntary contributions are invited, to be sent to Congressman Samuel Worth, at Washington, D. C., whose national reputation is a sufficient guarantee that the funds will be properly used. The secretary of each branch formed is requested to send him notification of the fact and of the number of members enrolled. Write to your acquaintances and interest them in the work. If this address comes to you wholly or in part in any paper, clip it out and send it to some other paper with a request to have it published. In all the ways which may suggest themselves to you interest others in the work, and you will soon be surprised at the result."

Though he had full faith in the success of the company, Hudson little realized what a remarkable verification there was to be for the encouraging prediction with which the address closed. When he had finished reading it, and while the applause was yet in progress, Warner arose and said:

"We are all in as solid harmony now, likely, as we will be at any time this evening. For the good of the cause, therefore, I move that we now circulate the hat."

The motion passed as easily as a vote of confidence in a political boss and wire-pulling crook in a packed convention. The hat was passed and gathered eleven dollars.

"We have here to-night," said Warner, rising again, "some from each part of the township and I suggest it would be a good plan to get up a little oyster supper or something in each town, the proceeds to be turned over to the treasurer of the new company. The sleighing is good now and the boys and girls generally are in the right trim for winter circulation. Let us therefore make hay while the snow shines—or words to that effect."

This suggestion was received with favor and it was decided that arrangements should be made for holding such a gathering at each village in the township, if the weather continued in harmony with the company.

Hudson then distributed copies of the printed address or circular, to be sent by different members of the company to various newspapers, retaining some to be similarly used by himself. It was agreed that as soon as the condition of the company's funds would provide for it a large number of copies of the circular should be printed and sent to as many newspapers throughout the country as would be likely to print it or make extracts from it. As the chief business of the local branch was now to add to its membership, it was decided that the next meeting need not be held until a month later and that each member, as before, should be a committee of one to add new members, either in person or by bringing in their names. It was believed that by a little effort practically all the residents of the township could be brought into membership by that time and there would be no occasion for further general meetings, as the local board could then take charge of the affairs of the township company, meeting from time to time like the township supervisors; its meetings, however, to be open to all members of the company. When the Anti-Trust Company adjourned that evening it had a membership of 110, with eleven dollars in the treasury. As the use of the hall for the evening had been donated, the expenses thus far had been nothing.

CHAPTER V.

THE next morning dozens of copies of the circular were headed for as many newspaper offices and personal letters were on the way to points where they would do the most good. This individual writing was carried on for a few days, and then the executive board got together and authorized Hudson to have another supply of the circulars printed. Then an apportionment of the states was made among the members of the executive board and a number of other members of the company, and in a short time the fund, with additional personal contributions, had been used in sending the circular to newspapers and to secretaries of various bodies, industrial, agricultural, co-operative and social, lists being preserved of the ones addressed. In the meantime the letters sent out were already bearing fruit.

Marked copies of papers, letters and cards, with varied suggestions, approvals and inquiries, were coming in to Hudson, to members of the board and others who

had been sending out the circular and personal letters. It had been at Hudson's suggestion that reports of organization and contributions were sent to Congressman Worth instead of himself. The wisdom of this course was soon shown. It was evident that if the returns were going to Worth in the increased proportions to be expected from the number locally received, they were accumulating in good shape. They were not to be left long in doubt on this point. In due time the following letter was received from Washington :

"My Dear Sir :

"Two weeks ago I received a letter from an Ohio man saying he enclosed a dollar for the good of the cause and he did not doubt that a good sized organization would soon be reported from that immediate region. By the same mail came a card from a Pennsylvania city saying, '100 members in our part of town and only fairly started.' I was at a loss to know what was meant until I received, that same afternoon, a marked paper containing a copy of your circular letter. My first impulse was to be provoked that I thus should be made practically sponsor for something I had given no consideration and as to which I had not even been consulted. I was so disposed to write to you; but as I read over the plan again that feeling was dispelled. I

now write to say that I am in full sympathy with the project and willing to aid it in any way in my power. I have delayed writing until now in order that I might return the compliment in the matter of surprises, for sanguine as you may have been in starting the circular on its journey, you hardly could have expected that within so short a time it would create such a tide of correspondence as is now flowing in upon me with daily increasing volume. I can not undertake to form a bureau to give it even temporarily the attention it would be accorded if the company were in actual operation. The most I can agree to do is this: To let it pile up a few weeks longer and then employ a force of clerks to go through it with me; ascertain the names of the secretaries of local branches formed; notify them to proceed on a certain date, with what representatives they have, to form the county, state and national boards, and when the national board has been formed, turn over to it the correspondence and contributions then accumulated. To wait until the whole country had been organized locally before proceeding to form the general organization would be to bury me under millions of unanswered and unopened communications. I have the pleasure to close with the prediction that within six months the state and national boards will be in practical operation, and that through them the enrolling of

members in the unorganized regions will soon be carried to completion.

"Yours very truly,

"SAMUEL WORTH."

Hudson was naturally very much delighted with this letter, and after reading it himself at the postoffice also read it to those who were present. For the information and encouragement of the patrons of the office in general, nearly all of whom were now members of the company, he tacked its type-written pages consecutively on the inside of the postoffice door, where they might serve temporarily as a bulletin to be read by all.

In point of membership, the Anti-Trust Company was flourishing around Martinville in regular green bay tree style. The suppers and entertainments had been given in the different villages with gratifying results, and the time was at hand for the general meeting arranged for the month previous. The developments of the meeting were not needed, however, to demonstrate that membership in the company had been making booming progress, and when, in the course of the meeting, it was announced that the membership of the company was represented in every family in the township, there was no occasion for surprise, though a hearty expression of applause was in order. For the benefit of those who

had not already become familiar with its contents, Hudson read the letter from Worth, and supplemented it by reading some of the miscellaneous messages of approval and encouragement received by himself and by others.

By a unanimous vote the executive board already elected was continued—the local affairs of the company were entrusted to its hands, and it was agreed that until better means of communication should be established any information of special interest should be disseminated by the board in the form of notices to be posted at each of the postoffices in the township. It was noticeable that some of the papers had already begun to cull from their correspondence and dispatches items relating to the company, and to use them, with comments and clippings, in special departments. It was correctly judged that the lines would soon develop as between the papers in sympathy with the aims of the company and those in the service of corporations and relying on monopoly to carry them through. Relevant to this subject Warner arose and said:

"I notice that three papers I take, and that I know a good many of the rest of you take, not only didn't print our letter or any portion of it but took the trouble to guy us and say that on this matter of monopoly our heads are full of wheels. But I notice, just the same, that they don't object to taking 'wheels' of another

kind out of our pockets. Well, they get no more out of mine. I've sent them word that I have no further use for their papers, and have subscribed for a couple that have given us a show and put in a good word for us. I hope that everybody here to-night—everybody in the township—will do the same thing."

Warner's remarks were heartily approved and a number of people arose to say they had decided on the same course and for the same causes. Hudson then spoke at some length on the subject. He said that the sentiment expressed was in line with the argument he had often offered before—that the only way to insure an independent press was to patronize and sustain it, regardless of the inducements held out by the organs of monopolists and political bosses. He said that for the wrecks of independent papers that strew the paths of journalism the people themselves, more than any other agency, had been directly responsible; that men who had given the best energies and the best years of their life in fighting for independence and common fair play had been deserted, betrayed and forced into insolvency or silence by the very people who should have been the strongest and longest to uphold them.

After this meeting, as after the previous one, letters were started for various newspaper offices, but they were of a different character. When their instructions had

been carried out there would be fewer papers of monopolists and politicians coming into the township and more of the other kind.

The proceeds secured from the several suppers and entertainments made a substantial showing. The original purpose to use it for stationery and postage in the sending out of the circular letter was abandoned for the reason, as indicated by the letter from Worth and other letters received, that it could not be told with much definiteness to what places it would be best to send them. It was plain enough that increasing correspondence was going on, and that if a letter were sent to any point there was no assurance that it would not find itself preceded by others of the same kind—perhaps find a branch already organized. It was accordingly decided that the correspondence would be directed only to points where it was known no organization had been effected, and that further work would be deferred until the notice should come from headquarters to proceed with the work of general organization. It had now come to be an unusual thing to pick up a paper that did not contain something—good, bad or indifferent—about the Anti-Trust Company; all of which served to boom the general agitation and bring nearer the date when the notice for general organization should be issued.

CHAPTER VI.

DURING the two weeks following there was no need of local meetings and little call for the posting of notices to provide the public with news of interest with reference to the developments of the Anti-Trust Company. The papers were full of it—full of praise and encouragement, abuse and belittlement. It was cropping out in all kinds of associations; many men of prominence were already among its advocates and the number of them was increasing. The fences, figuratively speaking, were already studded with politicians and others cautiously elevating dampened fingers into the air and preparing to set their sails accordingly. Badges, buttons, topical songs and other things illustrative of agitation of public sentiment were largely in evidence. It was therefore not surprising to Hudson, though none the less gratifying, to receive the following letter from Worth:

"My Dear Sir:

"Within a couple of weeks we expect to begin the work of sending out the notices for general organization. The correspondence received, the bulk of which

has not been opened yet, is immense. This fact now seems to be assured: Even though the interest at present displayed in the company should prove like that which attends the reign of various 'fads', and after a few months should then die out largely, success would nevertheless be assured, for even before the novelty of the movement wears away the people will have contributed enough to perpetuate and to hold them together afterward.

"The interest is continuously growing and has not yet reached its best agitation period. As soon as it seems to have reached that period (the general organization having been formed in the meantime) a day can be set to be known throughout the country as Contribution Day, when by individual contributions and entertainments of various kinds, the local organizations everywhere will proceed to raise funds for the national treasury of the company. The scoffers may call it a fad, a craze or what they will, but the result will be an enormous fund—larger than that now possessed by quite a number of monopolies, and sufficient to give the company a great start in its work. I send you by this mail some letters which doubtless will be of special interest to you, coming as some of them do from your part of the country, though they are not more striking than scores I have read from other sections, and of which there

undoubtedly are thousands among those yet to be opened.

"Yours very truly,

"SAMUEL WORTH."

The letters referred to were similar to many already received by Hudson in approval of the circular with which his name had been associated; but among the ones forwarded by Worth were several in which he took particular interest, being somewhat familiar with the conditions which prompted them. One of them read as follows:

"In considering myself initiated in the Anti-Trust Company by the little fee enclosed, I recall the fact that our little market town was once known as the Queen City of these regions—a pretty place and with business and competing industries enough to sustain its population and afford a market for the tributary country. It is now known as the site of ruins of natural industries, oil and otherwise,—a place where the few remaining ordinary old-timers admonish the young to pause not on the order of their going. Time was when the people of the place, by co-operation, independent voting and development of independent industries natural to the regions, might have made it a permanently prosperous city. But they didn't. They stood

in the way of their own prosperity. The population was made up of three classes—the good, the bad and the ones sometimes described as too mean to live and not good enough to die. Naturally each class had a good deal of scorn for the ways of the others; but on one point they were practically a unit—that is to say, on their standard of political action.

"They had seen their chief natural industries wrecked and scattered by monopolies whose candidates they had helped to elect again and again, and the very school children could have figured out for them that if the total appropriations of the state should be turned to that one region, it would take years to make good even what the people had permitted to be taken from them in the ruination of these industries and the checking of the development of others. And yet, when election day came, the people would invariably form the old unit—the very nice people along with the plain bums—in endorsement of that sort of robbery, justifying their actions by the hope of bringing back a portion of their confiscated advantages—not from the outside corporations which would neither have works of their own in the place nor permit others to do so, but in the form of assessments levied on the people of the state—some appropriation or state institution.

"Furthermore there were local servants of these cor-

porations on good pay who did the ordinary work of spies, and others who had graduated from that service—who had betrayed and sold to the opposition well meaning people who had trusted them. In their eagerness to be of service to such leaders, both at the polls and elsewhere, the people generally fairly fell over each other until their vocations were gone, and the place became simply a residence town for those in shape to object successfully to having the noise and smoke of any industrial establishments in the region.

"If asylums or other state institutions could be located around the outskirts of the city, they had no objections to offer, but on the contrary were in favor of them. The industrial and common business classes kept on following this foolish programme—destroying natural resources and industries—and praying, voting and wire-pulling for more asylums, hospitals and interstate soup houses, until practically nothing remained for them to do but to sprinkle and mow lawns in the summer, rake leaves in the fall, shovel snow in the winter and help the ice go out in the spring. Then, as fast as they could acquire enough to get out of the place with their families, they began to scatter, and kept on scattering until the town became what it is to-day. Good luck to the new company."

The following letter came from a clergyman :

"Most willingly I contribute the enclosed mite and ask to be enrolled as a member of the company. The world, with all its advancement, has not yet become unselfish enough to appreciate that dollars are cheaper instruments of experiment than human lives. Looking back through the ages upon the awful panorama of slaughter and gore, it has not yet departed from the belief that the steps of Progress, to be genuine, must be stained with human blood, and that now as in the past, among so-called civilized as well as uncivilized nations, brute force must be considered the final arbiter. No better—or worse—proof of this is needed than the spectacle to be seen to-day of all the nations of the world fairly armed to the teeth. Think for a moment what a mighty fund for conquests of peace the new company would have if it could receive for one year an amount equal to that expended in maintaining the armies of the world.

"Think, too, how enormous the fund would be if it simply represented the amount involved annually in labor troubles—lost wages, lost profits, lost property and expense to the state !

"And let me say here that I consider as not less important and desirable than the restraint of organized

and unorganized greed, the ultimate prospect that the proposed company will be able to draw the line distinctly between honest laboring men and their advocates, and the shiftless, vicious classes and the demagogues who appeal to their prejudices and passions. In the complete operation of such a company, as I look at it, these common loafers would have to go to work along with the more polished but not less dangerous loafers who live on the industry of others. In conclusion permit me to say that while the churches must bear to some extent the stigma of having become commercialized, and that many ministers command large salaries by reason of their willingness to harmonize the gospel with the comfortable views of those who are willing and able to pay handsomely for that kind of service—admitting this much, let the fact be not forgotten that, leaving out such exceptions, the commercial rewards of the ministry are poor—too poor to meet the needs of common charity."

Another letter contained this paragraph :

"It is a fitting thing that a movement like this should have its origin in the country rather than in the industrial centres, though it more directly concerns the latter. Not until they grew into closer union could either have the right measure of prosperity. They need to become

better acquainted with each other. They need to learn that the line between them does not simply fence off so-called 'hayseeds' and victims for swindlers, on the one hand, and bummers and dudes on the other. The townsman needs to pare down the idea that the countryman's special mission in this vale of tears is to raise produce and metropolitan mirth and scorn, and the countryman, in turn, needs to disabuse his mind of the notion that his brother in town was created for the purpose of paying four prices for butter too rank to be used for axle grease. They have a common lesson to learn. With reference to the projected company this much we may all know of its result in advance: It will be a good thing, and every dollar put into it will be well invested. If it should fail, it would be well worth whatever efforts or money it represented to learn its weak spots,—the causes of its failure,—and then, with the defects remedied, go ahead on the basis warranted by the experience thus gained."

A letter from an Ohio farmer was as follows:

"I'm in for the new company with what little I can spare to help it along. You notice that it never does for us farmers to have any strikes; but we're not forgotten when it comes to footing the bills for strikes among others, to say nothing of the chances our boys

take of having their heads cracked in acting the part of peacemakers and separating fighting capital and labor. Now, if we've got to turn out every little while to run railroads, coal mines and other things for the fellows who own them—and we had to do that last year in eleven states—it strikes me that we might as well form a partnership with the workingmen, either as a company or in connection with the government, and run these things ourselves and be done with it. So I say I'm in for the Anti-Trust Company."

The following letter was not signed, but it might be readily inferred that it came from someone who could substantiate what Hudson had said about independent newspapers and the processes of destroying them. The writer said :

"I have just read the call for members and contributions for the new company, and make haste to respond with a contribution—one of the kind my friend, the British Sovereign, sends to subjects in distress—that is to say, I send you a message of condolence. Later I might give the company a lift in the form of a resolution of respect, but not at present. If this seems cold to you, I have this to add in the way of a thaw :

"I am now editing a small but fairly profitable piece

of land with a good hennery attached, and I will agree to make you a present of the whole outfit as soon as you can furnish reasonable proof that you have 500 or more people working together unselfishly and unsuspiciously in a business company, having a common foe for its enemy and the common good of all for its object. You may get that number or many times that number, to work on sentimental, military, religious and other lines, but on business lines—never. The bumps of suspicion, envy and greediness will very shortly stand out so plainly on members of such a company that he who runs may not miss them ; and I here want to make the friendly suggestion that if you establish a paper in connection with the company, the line, 'We have come to stay,' be dropped from the introductory announcement.

"As a farmer, using plain, homely terms, I cite the fact that in a herd of swine, each member thereof having the freedom to act the hog as much it can, there are bound to be large hogs, smaller hogs and runts, and that no process of driving away the larger swine from time to time will leave the remainder of the herd without some representatives greedier and more capable than the rest of getting their feet into the trough. No process of driving away swine would change that condition. If you could drive away the swinishness that would change it, and that alone. So I contend that the

doctrine, that genuine and progressive human liberty involves the freedom for every man to be as greedy as he can, is bound to develop abnormal illustrations of that greed, and that, if the greed itself can not be removed, the removal of such illustrations amounts to nothing permanent.

"It was said of old that devils cast out of man took possession of a herd of swine, and that the dumb brutes, ashamed of such tenants or otherwise impelled, rushed headlong into the sea. Well, if devils of swinishness were not in turn cast into man was it because people already possessed, as they still possess, a practical substitute in the spirit of greed and selfishness—which to this day they desire should be cast out of others, but which, in their own case, they feel may be safely left to their individual judgment and temperate control?

"Another point against your company: It contemplates the idea that in its operation the people in general will voluntarily work for the good of others as well as for themselves. Now, by what process, except force, do you expect to cause people to help others who will not even help themselves—people so lazy they consider it the next thing to an intrusion and injustice on the part of Nature that the sun compels them either to sweat or put themselves to the exertion of moving around into the shade? Why, bless you, there are

people right here too lazy to set a hen, too shiftless to build a chicken coop, who consider me a kind of poultry monopolist for trying to operate a modest incubator in connection with my hennery.

"No, your company won't work. It takes a scope too broad and generous at the start. If you put it on the basis that, standing between the extreme of shiftless wallowing on the one hand and that of overgrown greed on the other, it will protect itself from both while experimenting on itself with a view to diminishing the number of graduates to such extremes in the future,—then I am with you for my individual share in the general experiment. In the meantime pardon me for repeating the suggestion already offered—that if you establish an organ it will be the part of discretion not to use that line, 'We have come to stay.'"

It will be seen that the writer hardly could have offered better arguments in favor of the new company than in the foregoing letter, and that he could not have received more than condensed extracts from the circular address, inasmuch as the company defined at the close of his letter as a good one to form was exactly such a one as contemplated in the plan of the Anti-Trust Company. He therefore could be counted as a future member of the company.

From another town came a letter in part as follows:

"Extensive membership in the company can not be expected here openly at present, but the sentiments of the people are all right, and it is safe to predict that there is no town of the size in the country that will eventually have more members than this in the company. It used to be known as the Hub of these regions. It is now known as a town owned by a monopoly whose very name it were the next thing to treason to use here. Even the employes do not use it but substitute various *nom de plumes* less associated with wreckage and plunder. Nor does the monopoly itself do business under its own name. On none of its variously named establishments does it place that name. It is a thing to be used only in a whisper, and to pull it from the sacred precincts of silence in an abrupt manner means to startle as many associations and combinatians as are revealed in jerking a fish-hook out of a full box.

"Who brought about this state of things? Chiefly the people themselves. Their logic was, in encouraging a branch concentration of the monopoly's interests here, that this was as proper a place as any if a point were needed where any considerable instalments of legal tender, collected at other points, should be distributed.

Whether any of this legal tender, in its transition to this point, should come through questionable processes, was an outside and far-fetched consideration. A dollar was a dollar—it might be in the pocket of a rascal one day, a minister the next and in the day dream of a country editor the next. The source of the dollar was therefore an out-of-the-way sentiment—the dollar itself was the thing.

"And so, like a town bidding tens of thousands of dollars for the location and patronage of a prize fight, while neglecting legitimate industries, our good people bid for this monopoly by helping to destroy home concerns. People who raised their voices against the combine and its methods, and in favor of independence and the free development of the natural resources of the region, were termed chronic kickers and blocks in the way of the progress of the town. In consequence monopoly came and independence went.

"And what was the result? Did the business of the monopoly bring money into the town? It did. With the profits it secured through railroad discriminations, the confiscation of property by depression, and extortionate charges where the people had helped it to kill competition, did it not pay good wages to its local employes? It did. Have not its employes, like its carriage horses, the opportunity to be well housed and well fed? They have. Then why do they kick?

"It is because they must be as dumb as the horses in the matter of expressing any views that do not harmonize with the methods of the monopoly—and such views, they find are many. They must either keep mum, lose their jobs, their patronage or get out of the town. As for voting—well, no congressman or member of the legislature is elected from this region who dares, on the stump, in print or otherwise, to open his mouth against the combine. It has been a lesson to the people. They have learned that there is more of the American spirit of freedom—more healthy and lasting prosperity—in a town maintained by many small industries than in one where a single concern, in which the people have no voice, controls practically the whole business and consequently the town.

"They have tied their own hands here in this respect, but will be found willing to be untied, and for that reason you may be assured that the new company will eventually have the right kind of a membership in this city."

Hudson was familiar enough with the localities described in some of these letters to know that the writers had confined themselves to facts and that all might have gone more into detail in the same vein if they had been so disposed.

CHAPTER VII.

IN due time the notice came from headquarters fixing the dates for county, state and national organization. Each district elected an executive board and a representative to take part in the election of the board of the next higher organization. At each district election expressions were had as to the compensation of officers and their duties; methods of raising funds; what monopoly should first be fought,—these and many other questions were discussed and resolutions drawn up embodying in substance the ideas thus expressed. These were in turn discussed in the county conventions, boiled down and passed on to the state conventions, to be further solidified and sent to the national executive board, which body was authorized to draw up a constitution and by-laws to be submitted to the people for adoption. The general organization was thus formed. As was to be expected there were thousands of election districts in the country where no local board had yet been organized, but the general membership was great in its proportions, representing every state in the

union and nearly every county, though it had been less than six months since Hudson first broached the plan. The contributions which had been sent to Worth already amounted to hundreds of thousands of dollars, and they represented, not any combined effort to raise funds, but simply individual and voluntary contributions.

There was every prospect that within a short time more than half the population of the country would be enrolled under the banner of the Anti-Trust Company and there was the further cheering prospect that when a date should be fixed to be regarded throughout the country as Contribution Day, and that number of people should set to work with the common purpose of raising funds for the company, the result would be a great financial start for the new enterprise. In the transaction of the business of the national executive board each member had charge of the correspondence of his respective state, represented its general interests on the board, and through the organizations below directed the completion of organization in his state.

In the meantime it was understood that voluntary contributions were acceptable from any source, and they came in liberally. The work was pushed along until every election district in the country had an organization—necessarily small in many cases but in others covering all possible membership in the district.

Then came the adoption of the constitution and by-laws and provisions for incorporation. These provisions arranged for a general incorporation, with specified objects in each state. As the development of the business necessitated the including of other objects it could be effected by the formation of minor companies within the company, just as the Standard Oil monopoly, from time to time, organizes various oil and gas companies under various names, filling in the names of some of its lawyers or other employes as incorporators.

Next came Contribution Day. The people of Martinville, of the other hamlets of the township, and of the township in general, set to work, like their fellow members of the company throughout the country to raise funds. The evening of Contribution Day, both in city and country, was devoted to benefit entertainments of all kinds. The one held at Martinville, like most of the others, was of a musical and literary character. The programme included a twenty-minute address of special interest from Hudson, who took for his subject these lines from John Boyle O'Reilly's poem, "The City Streets:"

> "God pity them all! God pity the worst,
> For the worst are reckless and need it most;
> When we trace the causes why lives are curst
> With a criminal taint, let no man boast.

The race is not run with an equal chance—
The poor man's son carries double weight ;
Who have not, are tempted ; inheritance
Is a blight or blessing of man's estate.
No matter that poor men sometimes sweep
The prize from the sons of the millionaire—
What is good to win must be good to keep,
Else the virtue dies on the topmost stair.
Come back to the light, for my brain goes wrong
When I see the sorrows that can't be cured ;
If this is all righteous, then why prolong
The pain for a thing that must be endured ?
The earth was not made for its people—that cry
Has been hounded down as a social crime ;
The meaning of life is to barter and buy
And the hardest and shrewdest are masters of time.
We have churches enough and they do their best,
But there's little of Christ in our week day laws ;
The gospel is taught but the gain is test—
We punish the sin while we cherish the cause.
Not gold but souls should be first in the age
That bows its head at the Sacred Word ;
But our laws are blind to a starving wage,
While guarding the owner's sweat-wrung hoard.
'It is not our fault,' say the rich ones. No
'Tis the fault of a system old and strong,
But men are the judges of systems ; so
The cure will come if we own the wrong.
It will come in peace, if the right men lead—
It will sweep in storm if it be denied ;
The law to bring justice is always decreed,
And on every hand are the warnings cried."

Using these appropriate lines for his subject Hudson painted a rosy picture of social changes to be effected in the future, and the movement represented in the Anti-Trust Company was to be an important step in the direction of bringing them about. It was not to be expected that the operation of the company would transform into such beings as they ought to be the handicapped creatures of the world, coming either from hovels or palaces.

But a good deal that passes for selfishness, he said, is a spirit of self-protection, forced now through the necessities of the so-called business age into individual and collective acts which form in the aggregate the chief cause of the industrial and commercial troubles of the country. He argued that this spirit of self protection could healthfully exist and along with it the spirit of common brotherhood. It was so in the case of the old pioneers, and it could and should be so to-day.

There was no need of martyrs in working toward such a condition, and there was no sense in waiting until by some wonderful transformation all humanity had become perfect before expecting any further progress in that direction. Because people were all selfish in some degree it did not follow that all must become perfect before they would have the right to refuse to be martyrs to that selfishness. "The people who formed

this republic," he said, "did not, and could not wait for perfection in themselves before they formed it. They simply shook off what they agreed had become most obnoxious, and trusted to themselves and future generations to shake off whatever should develop to be such in the future. In throwing off monarchy they retained negro slavery; but the time came when they recognized that that, too, was obnoxious and they shook it off. And now, not in war but in peace, they proceed to deal with the question of industrial and commercial slavery, with its attendant issues of private appropriation of public rights, financial jugglery, fictitious stocks and artificial business. There is no need that any man should become a pessimist and paint gloomy pictures of the future. There is no natural want without something in nature to meet it. There is no natural human need, individual or collective, that cannot be supplied.

"The people will go on in the future, as in the past, throwing off forms of oppression of their own creation and profiting in some measure from every lesson until a new civilization will develop, in which ambition and competition will find scope not simply in the sustenance of self, but in contributing to the common sum of enlightenment and prosperity. With this development —with these thoughts and aims growing in the minds of the people—children with healthier bodies and

better brains will come into the world. Each generation will be an improvement on its predecessor, and humanity, needing not to wait for another life to enjoy the blessings of existence, will move onward and upward in the path of progress."

Another portion of the programme was a paper by Warner, much different from the earnest address by Hudson. The paper described a plan he had in mind for giving a series of charity entertainments for such kings of finance, monopoly politicians, writers and clergymen as should be thrown out of their present jobs, and perhaps go on a strike here and there, when the new company got under headway.

The programme in other respects was a good one and what was more to the point, the receipts were of satisfactory proportions. The next day they were sent, with the funds previously raised, to the national treasury of the company at Washington. From all election districts where local organizations existed—and they now existed in a large majority of all the districts—the funds thus collected poured into the national treasury. The result was, so to speak, "Millions for defense but not a cent for tribute." Worth's prophecy had already come true—even while the movement was yet a novelty the people had contributed enough, rightly used, to destroy several good sized monopolies and to gather power in doing so to destroy others.

CHAPTER VIII.

AS previously explained, one of the matters of progressive consideration, from the local organizations up to the national board, had been as to what monopoly should first be made to feel the power of the people. The conclusion of the national board on this question was therefore readily reached, and was to the point that inasmuch as the Standard Oil Trust had begotten a greater brood of trusts than any other it should be the first one to be called to account, and be treated to some of the same medicine. It possessed, as it had for years, control of the whole oil business of the country, and it was smooth sailing now for the great combine.

Time was when it had more to do to maintain its supremacy—when independent competition, actual and prospective, put it to a good deal of trouble in shifting and manipulating its screws on producers, refiners, transporters and consumers. It now had the refineries and independent lines frozen out of business, and could apply the aforesaid screws to the producers and consumers at its own sweet will.

It is true that here and there an independent refinery could be found, but such existed only by the grace of the big monopoly, and did simply a gleaning business. It was as if a rich farmer, when his hay crop had been gathered, might permit some poor fellow to mow the grass in the fence corners, or reap with his sickle, around the occasional stump and stone pile, the straggling stalks of grain which the large harvesting machinery did not reach. Such was the independent refiner at this time. The producer, who had been the last to be benefitted in the Standard's programme, in advancing the price of crude and keeping down the price of refined, thus to force the independent lines and refineries to the wall, was now at the mercy of his master. While this process of squeezing his fellow independents was going on he received a fair price for his oil—a price there had been none but monopoly reasons for withholding from him for a long period before. As the price of oil advanced, the papers in general, led by the Standard organs, grew more bullish in their reports. The daily consumption was greater than the production. The stocks were decreasing rapidly. The conditions as they were made to appear were such as to create the belief in the mind of the producer that he was now a necessity ; that his product was bringing a better price in spite of the monopoly,

and that although the independent lines and refineries might be forced to go under, he was in a position to be unaffected.

He had no need now of refineries or lines. He had oil—oil that the world must have, and it must come to him and pay him his price for it. What occasion had he now to concern himself about the Standard? It, too, must come to him and deal with him on his own terms, for the statistical proofs showed him to be master of the situation. Foolish man!

Time passed and the independent refiners were forced out of business. The independent lines in which the Standard, step by step, had been securing stock, went the way of the Tidewater and others. Soon afterward a change came over the spirit of the producer's dream. The reports, guided by the Standard papers, grew more bearish. Every day it was being demonstrated that there was more oil in the country than had been thought of by Horatio or anybody else—lots of it untapped in New York; lots of it in Colorado, Wyoming, California, the Southern States and here and there throughout the country in general. All that was required was development. Of course the price of crude went down.

Soon the Standard papers resumed the publication of their stock articles as to the probable or possible ruin-

ation of the Pacific coast markets by the petroleum of Peru, and other oil fields showing development in that part of the world. The price of crude naturally went down some more. Then the beacon lights of the Standard organs were turned once more in the direction of favorite and never failing resort, and lo and behold! there it was looming along again—the same old tidal wave of Russian petroleum which had so often served before as a pretext for depressing the price of crude—which now went down again.

And thus, with the independent lines and refiners out of the way and competition killed, the producer was obliged to sell his product for whatever the Standard chose to give him for it, and the consumer, in turn, had to pay for the refined products the prices fixed by the Standard—a monopoly absolute. How much better it had been if all these—the producer, refiner, transporter and consumer—had understood each other in time, and worked unitedly for a common square deal! True, there had been moves in that direction, some of which had grown to large proportions, but there had never been half the representation there should have been nor half the unity.

Too many within the lines of action were a hindrance rather than a help, readier to war on each other over bones introduced by the Standard, than to make war upon the common enemy.

Too many of them were shortsighted or indifferent in the matter of building up an independent press, which should supplant the organs of monopoly and be free and able to give the public the facts.

There were too many so-called independent oil men who did not even lend an independent paper the support of being among its subscribers, to say nothing of these who would extend such patronage as they had to Standard establishments in consequence of the bait of cut prices, which could always be held out by the monopoly-supported concerns when they might thereby injure an independent competitor. Finally there were too many ways in which the Standard yeast of distrust and jealously was permitted to work, and refusing to be held together by the earnest, honest men who were in the work in heart, mind and purse, the misguided oil men permitted the Standard to work dissensions among them and make them instruments of their own destruction.

NOTE.—This book will have amply justified its publication if it reaches enough readers among oil men who at this point file a protest—resent the suggestion, even for the purposes of a story, that the Standard Oil Combine may be permitted to complete its programme and acquire total possession or absolute control of all branches of the oil business. The answer to them is this: In the past four years, starting with the Producers Oil Company, Limited, and in spite of all the obstructions, losses and discouragements the Standard could put in your way, you have built up the most for-

midable opposition that monopoly has ever encountered in this country, and standing now between it and its otherwise complete conquest of the whole oil business, you are in a position to control your measure of success in the future, and to say whether or not you will be responsible for such an ultimate condition as the assumed one which is intended to taunt you in the foregoing chapter. That you have made such gratifying progress in the past four years has been due to the fact that you have paid more heed than you ever did before to the lesson taught over and over again with particular emphasis to the people of the oil regions—the lesson of co-operation. The advance you have made in the spirit of that lesson has held your still distinctive interests together against a common enemy, in spite of all the efforts to create discords and stimulate special selfishness in your ranks. Retaining all the advance you have made, the way is now open for you to broaden the spirit of co-operation into an organization in which there shall be no distinctive interests—one in which every stockholder, whether producer, refiner, transporter, dealer or consumer, will have a like interest in the welfare of every branch of the business, and whose individual interest will prosper only through the common prosperity of all. Toward such an organization you have already taken the initiatory steps, and it rests with you to say what the result will be. It is now within your power to build up a co-operative association which will be an Anti-Trust Company of itself—not a monopoly, no better but in degree than the Standard, but one in which you will receive fitting compensation for your products and your services, and will be approved and sustained by the public. But a few days ago (June 4, 1895), in presenting the annual report of the board of managers of your chief company, the secretary and treasurer thus clearly defined your position: "Standing as you do, with so much accomplished, with so much to encourage; with duty, both as citizens striving for an inherent, natural right, and as business men contending for a common business privilege, laying its peremptory command upon you, what shall the issue be? It is for you, the faithful remnant of that thousand odd men who organized and went out to battle four years ago in defence of your property and your industry, to decide—whether you shall,

through indifference, indecision, want of spirit and courage, or other human frailty, lose all you have thus far gained in name and material advantage, and by your own volition elect to remain as a servile class to be further exploited and despoiled to swell the millions of those who absolutely rule you in your business; whether you shall go on with renewed vigor, with that patience which gives ability to do and to suffer in a great cause, without losing heart or steadfastness of purpose, wringing at last from your oppressors the conceded right to do an unmolested business, or, at worst, overwhelmed by superior forces, to go down, heroically yielding up everything but honor and manhood. Which of these it shall be, is for this body of men—strong in the possibilities which belong to abundant resources, high order of energy, a favoring opportunity, and a good cause, to say."

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN the national executive board of the Anti-Trust Company decided to proceed first against the Standard monopoly it lost no time in following the decision by action. An account was taken of the little gleaning refineries and the larger dismantled ones which had not yet been sold by the sheriff. These were readily bought by the company and new ones were built, together with tankage and local pipe lines to production assured to the company or purchased by it outright.

And there was plenty of such production. With the independent organizations out of the way, and with nothing to bar it from getting crude at its own price without benefitting any competitor, there had been no incentive for the Standard to go further into the producing business, and its personal production was now largely of the partnership order—in the companies it had absorbed in carrying out other programmes, and in companies in which there were individuals it had given financial backing in return for services of a more or less beautiful character.

The agents of the Anti-Trust Company found plenty of individual production, and as the owners of such were mainly included now in the membership of the new company, more production was offered than could be taken care of for some time. This was very gratifying, as it relieved the company of the necessity of bringing oil from other countries, which it would have done for a time if necessary to loosen the grip of the Standard, and give the new company a start. Big refineries were now going up under the auspices of the new enterprise at the most advantageous points—refineries which should not simply turn out illuminants but the many products to be had from petroleum.*

Tankage was now going up rapidly and all neccessary refining and shipping equipments were being provided.

*It is natural enough, no doubt, that those who take a raw material and make refined products from it should know the most about the number, names and uses of such products; but is it not a little singular that the average person having no connection with the oil business can do nearly as well as many producers in naming products of petroleum? Is it not a fact that with scores of men—hundreds of them—the oil producing business has simply been regarded as a process of drilling holes into the ground, securing certain quantities of a thing called oil, then permitting their "customers" to take charge of it for them, keep their books for them, charge what they please for the service and pay what they please for the oil? How many producers have paused to think of the actual value of their commodity as represented in its multiplied products, or of how many of these products they might themselves manufacture with more profit than in otherwise disposing of their oil?

Pipe lines were being laid in spite of the usual obstructive tactics practiced by the old combine. While tankage was thus being provided it occurred to the Standard, as it had occurred before, when the appearance of any competition had been presented, that the individual producer should be shown the desirability of signing contracts to deliver all his oil to the Standard for a term of years—covering the period, with an ample margin, which it set for killing the new company. But the producer refused any longer to be shown the error of his ways in this respect, and the plan would not work.

In the meantime the new company was rapidly increasing its facilities of every kind, and notice was being given by the national executive board, through the subordinate boards and the newspapers fixing a day which, although the company had now been in growing operation for some time, should be considered especially the date for uniform withdrawal of support from all monopoly concerns. A list was prepared of all the products of petroleum, and it was explained that every product of the Anti-Trust Company would bear its trade mark.

Without regard to the inducements which might be held out by others, the members of the Anti-Trust Company were urged to stand together and refuse to buy at any price or take as a gift, any product in com-

petition with the products of their own company, so long as the latter were to be had. The members of the company everywhere were further urged to make the day a date when they should make common withdrawal of support of all kinds from all concerns they knew to be in the service of monopoly.

While affairs were at this stage Warner dropped in one night at Hudson's place and said he had a request to make.

"I've been writing some letters," he said, "that it strikes me would be all right to send out from headquarters, and if you would send them down to Worth, and explain things at the same time, probably he'd send them along. I could send them myself, of course, but would rather have them go out from headquarters. Let me read one or two of them. This one is to the solicitor of the Standard Oil Trust:

"It is a matter of report that the Standard pays you $50,000 a year, or as much as the salary of the President of the United States, which is a good deal more, no doubt, than you were able to command when your voice used to be raised against the methods of the monopoly you have since helped to direct. Now, while we do not mean to insinuate that you have not come as near earning your salary as any President the country

has recently had, we are unable to see that you are rendering any service to the nation which entitles you to $50,000 per annum of its wealth.

"Moreover, we deem it an act of charity to restrain the combine you serve before its members hurt themselves in trying to get hold of other planets. Not as a matter of good faith but for publication, would you mind letting us know how much more they now own of this land of the free and the home of the brave than is set forth in the following extracts? The extracts are from a book that ought to have a place in every home and every school in the land, namely—Henry D. Lloyd's 'Wealth Against Commonwealth.' Read:

"'Poor's Railroad Manual shows these men and their associates to be presidents or directors in thousands of miles of railroads, valued at hundreds of millions. Their names were prominent in the railroad deal of 1892 and 1893, which had for its end to put the whole of New England under one hand, controlling both its land and water connections with the rest of the country. They stand at the receipt of custom at the railroad gates to the oil regions; to the coal fields of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Illinois; the copper, gold and silver mines of the West; the iron mines of the West and South; the turpentine forests and the lumber regions and cotton fields; the food

producing areas of the Mississippi basin; the grazing lands of the plains. They are owners in the principal steamship lines between America and Europe and in the 'whalebacks,' which appear destined to drive other models out of the freight traffic of the lakes, and have begun to appear on the Eastern and Western oceans to capture the carrying business of the world. * * * They are in telegraphs, the gas supply of our large cities, street-railways, steel mills, shipyards, Canadian and American iron mines, town sites. Ore dug out of their own iron mines at the head of Lake Superior is carried along over their own railroad to their own furnaces and mills. * * * Betrayal, bankruptcy, broken hearts, and death, have kept quick step with the march of the conquerors in iron as in oil. They are in the combination in anthracite coal, with which the acquisition by an American syndicate of the Nova Scotia coal deposits is closely connected. Theirs is the largest share in the natural-gas business in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, Indiana, Illinois. They are in the combination which controls lead, from pig to white lead, and turpentine and linseed-oil and paints. * * Most of their interests are in public functions, railroads, pipe lines, telegraphs, postal contracts, steamers, municipal franchises and the like; but it is impossible to know their full extent with our present crude means

for enforcing the truth that property is power and that civilization endures no irresponsible and anonymous power. The corporation is an agency by which the capitalist can do business in ambuscade. * * This wealth is as much too vast for the average arithmetical comprehension as the size of the dog-star, 400 times larger than the sun. These incomes are sums which their fortunate owners could not count as they received them. If they did nothing but stand all day at the printing-presses of the Treasury Department while the millions came uncrinkled out in one-dollar greenbacks, or worked only at catching the new dollars as they rolled out from the dies of the mint they could not count them. If they worked eight hours a day, and six days a week, and fifty-two weeks in the year, they could not count their money. The dollars would come faster than their fingers could count them; the dollars would slip out of their clutch and fall to the floor, and, piling up and up, would reach their knees, their middle, their arms, their mouth, and Midas would be snuffed out in his own gold.'"

"Really, now, Mr. Solicitor, we cannot stand by and see them snuffed out in that way, especially when so many other people are snuffed out by them in exactly the opposite way. We cannot permit them longer to be exposed to the danger of being drowned in that

manner. The golden stream which threatens them already represents too many dried up springs—too many shriveled up industries that used to be prosperous. You will therefore excuse us for knocking the props from under the concern whose methods enable it to lay so much of the country under tribute."

Warner's next letter was a lengthy communication addressed to a railroad company, the chief business of whose officials, he charged, was to violate the charter of the road, rob the stockholders and the public by discriminating against ordinary shippers in favor of the big combine of the region; to switch the affairs of the road around in various processes of bankruptcy and receivership; to re-organize, re-name and re-fund; in the meantime to get out special trains from time to time with job lots of officials and *chefs* whose province it was to teeter on their toes and heels and look wise around the stations, and to note between stops whether any poor son of Somewhere was earning his forty-cents a day, gross, and something for the road as well, or was acquiring extravagant tastes by eating berries from the bushes along the way.

He described one of such official outfits, and set forth that better boards could be formed from the ordinary subordinates—that such boards would conduct the business of the road more capably, honestly and profit-

ably for the stockholders and the public than the jobbers who held their places by reason of their "pulls," and depended on their subordinates for whatever practical knowledge of railroading they found necessary. He drew on Lloyd for another quotation as follows:

"Out of $800,000,000 paid yearly in this country for the carriage of freight, it was estimated in 1888, by one who knew (Hon. Franklin B. Gowen before the United States Senate Interstate Commerce Commission), that $50,000,000 to $100,000,000 goes to favored shippers. As the result of a personal examination made as an expert for stockholders, he declared that one of the great trunk lines had in the last twenty years thus diverted to the favorites of the managers $100,000,000 of the money of the stockholders. Besides his yachts and trotters, every Captain of Industry worth talking about keeps his stud of railway presidents and general freight agents."

In the course of his letter Warner had this to say with reference to charters and violations of the law:

"You have an old right of way along the valley here that you hold by patching it up and running a so-called train over it once a year—at a rate of speed that gives the rabbits with late broods along the track ample time to grow enough to be able to get out and move on. Holding this unused right of way, and with no competitor, your own operating line has not been profitable (for

the stockholders and the public), judging from the receivership business, re-organizing and re-funding going on from time to time. You should therefore thank our company for preparing to supplant you with a road of its own.

"The regret of the company in thus supplanting you is tempered by the thought that you, with other roads, have practiced discriminations against this place to the extent of hundreds of thousands of dollars and that, when so found guilty and ordered to make reparation by one of the highest authorities in the land, you ignored and in effect defied that authority. In letting you go the company's sorrow is also tempered by the thought that in standing in the way of other roads you have held back the development of this region, and that you long ago forfeited your right to do business—to say nothing of your right to prevent others from doing business."

"There," said Warner, "just send those along to Worth and tell him they size things up as well as you could have done yourself—or words to that effect. Tell him I'm getting up some more and trust he will send them to the right spots."

Hudson took the letters and said he would send them as requested.

CHAPTER X.

THE day set for the formal beginning of the raid on individual selfishness and the end of patronage of monopolies and monopoly establishments, brought forth great fruits. One of its results was the stopping of monopoly papers, the ordering out of advertisements and the withdrawal from them of support of patronage of all kinds. The circulation of such papers, which had been steadily falling off since the formation of the Anti-Trust Company, was now cut down to less than the number of employes of the combines such organs served—for many of such employes were now in sentiment with the new company. In vain did the organs send out their agents with increased premiums, cut prices and other inducements. The people would have nothing to do with them. Papers of all political complexions, known to be in the service of the monopolies and political jobbers, went overboard, and appeals in the name of party were made in vain against the overthrow. The substance of the answer was this:

"This is not party but business. The monopolies

have not recognized party lines in dealing with us. Neither do we propose to recognize any party lines in dealing with them."

This good work—a work sufficient in itself to effect a great but peaceful revolution in public sentiment, and worth alone the price of the formation of the new company,—was carried on all over the country, taking in the organs of all combines. If the Anti-Trust Company had been able to bring about no more than this result, the credit would belong to it of having accomplished one of the greatest and most important awakenings of public sentiment in history.

With reference to the products of petroleum the lines of public patronage were most closely drawn. The people would not take any of them at any price unless they were unable to obtain those bearing the trade mark of the Anti-Trust Company. Although the total manufacturing capacity of the company was several times greater than that of all the independent concerns at any previous period of the business, the company was overwhelmed with orders. Increased facilities and more plants were immediately found to be necessary and the work of providing such was carried on with all possible despatch. All that was required to command the trade in all the products of petroleum was the capacity to supply the demand. The patronage

was assured through the membership of the company. Though the profits from the business established were great in the aggregate—and were obtained by lowering generally the prices to consumers and making them as uniform as distance, obstruction and other considerations would permit—it was decided to boom the funds and the progress of the company by fixing another day for individual and general contributions. When it had been observed the work of the previous Contribution Day, great though it had been, was small as compared with the result. Men of means, who had built up a legitimate business, but who had seen from the growing power of combinations that there was a time coming when their business must become simply a branch of some trust or go to the wall—these men saw in the development of the Anti-Trust Company the promise of a show for all who did business in a legitimate way, and they gave gladly and liberally.

From the progress the company had made it was no longer in order to look upon these contributions as gifts. They were investments. By all classes of people these investments were made—from the poorest workingmen up to the men who would have been considered rich before the time came when such might have no assurance that they were any safer than their poorest brother if the crushing policy of some combine brought

them in its way. Accordingly when the returns from the second Contribution Day came in they increased the funds of the company to such an extent it had no reason to wish to trade treasuries with Uncle Sam himself.

The work of monopolizing the oil business went on in all its branches under the direction of the new company, meeting everywhere with all possible opposition from the old combine, but moving on just the same. It was worth the price of admission, so to speak, to have these obstructions and delays interposed, or attempted, just to see the monopoly claims and arguments riddled by the independent press of the country. It was now making a feature of showing the different kinds of business in which Standard capital was practicing monopoly methods outside of the oil business, and lines were being drawn accordingly for present and future action. Meanwhile its grip on the oil business was rapidly loosening. Unable to find markets for its products, its plants and lines were becoming clogged.

The price of crude oil, first regulated by the natural developments of the business, then by speculation, then in an alleged open market controlled by the Standard, was now regulated by the business of the Anti-Trust Company, which had already advanced the price of crude and yet made a marked average reduction in the prices of the refined products, doing so with handsome

profits. The new company bought nothing but actual oil, and the only way in which the Standard could depress the crude market would be by being able to offer the new company more actual oil than it could receive, which was out of the question, as it was in shape to take at the market price—its own price—all the oil the Standard could disgorge, the same as in the case of an individual seller. Moreover, apart from these safeguards, there was the common bond of membership in the company sufficient to keep the members from being drawn into any betrayal of its interests by the bait of high prices, low prices or no prices.

The long successful methods were resorted to again by the Standard of squeezing the new company by the manipulation of railroad rates, but the attempts only served to cause temporary annoyance and to add strength to the work already in process of causing the forfeiture of many violated charters with which the Standard was identified. In spite of attempted obstructions of rights of way, interference with the manufacture of supplies and shipment of the same, the pipe lines of the new company, both for crude and refined, were reaching across the country in all directions—to the seaboard, the lakes and through the interior. The idea so long held, that the establish-

ment of a line to the seaboard was the one great desideratum, was only a part of the plan of the new company. It was figured that if the tribute paid by former independents to the Standard and the railroads had been diverted to another purpose it would have been sufficient to extend a pipe line artery from the Atlantic to the Pacific and provide all the branch veins the system required. The way the railroads shifted their rates and applied the screws of extortion as the lines of the company extended from point to point made more material for the legal representatives of the company in their collection of evidence against the railroads preparatory to having the charters forfeited of those that had violated the law.

Moreover, the new company, in shipping to distant points where extortion could yet be practiced, could well afford to pay the extortionate rate on small quantities when by so doing it compelled the Standard to supply larger quantities and sell below cost in bidding to hold the trade. The new company could ship enough to cause prices to be cut to next to nothing, and the members of the Anti-Trust Company in such localities, acting in conjunction with the local executive boards, could lay in a supply of the enemy's cut-price products, and thus make a proportionate saving for the new company while extending its lines.

CHAPTER XI.

ONE of the objections which had been offered against the selection of the Standard Oil Trust as the first trust to be attacked was that it would be like shutting the cage after the bird had flown—that there was no assurance the oil bnsiness would last more than a few years longer; that the the supplies would then be exhausted and that the Standard, with the hundreds of millions it had taken out of the business, could laugh at the awakening of the people that came too late. They held it reasonable to believe that scientific research, stimulated by a growing scarcity of petroleum, would at no remote period develop a substitute for illuminating oil which would send the latter the way of the pine knot and the tallow dip, and that whatever capital should be invested in the meantime in the oil business would be subject to that risk.

The Anti-Trust Company had now progressed beyond the point where those who had offered these arguments might pose as prophets. Since the formation of the company a sufficient time had elapsed to remunerate

it financially for its investments in the oil business, to say nothing of the peaceful revolution it had effected in paving the way for its conquest of other Trusts. Though some scientist should flash away the whole illuminating oil business in the twinkling of an eye, it could have no other effect on the company than to cause a greater centralization of its forces on combines booked to come next after the Standard, and which were already feeling in an effective way the power of the Monopoly of the People. Finally, the oil business was not exhausted, and the profits were coming to the company—to the people—which used to pile up in the Standard tills until they found an outlet in the absorption of railroad, mining, steamship, telegraph and other profitable investments as indicated in the preceding pages.

What the agricultural classes had sought in their approval and support of the organization was not the opportunity to leave their farms and go to work for the company, but such a re-adjustment of the industrial and commercial conditions as would give them steadier markets for their products—effect a better balance between the American industrial and agricultural classes and create a better understanding and more practical bond of sympathy between them. Their efforts to that end were bearing splendid fruit, and they could look logically into the future to a time when what they

had termed The Anti-Trust Company could fitly be called The American Employment Bureau, giving employment to workingmen in all channels of industry and commerce hitherto controlled by private monopolies, and using its surplus earnings in the extension of means of employment and in public improvements. Then no sober, industrious citizen need be without employment, either in the company or for himself, and his earnings, whatever they might be, would be such as could give him no just cause for complaint, inasmuch as they would be regulated by the natural laws of supply and demand, and not by the unnatural laws which afford a temporary rush of work and then as abruptly cause a shut-down for an indefinite period—that is to say, while a famine is caused in the products created in the artificial rush between the sandwiched periods of stagnation. There then could be no reasonable cause for such a thing as a strike in any branch of industry or commerce controlled by the company, for whatever the wages might be, those who earned them would know they were governed by natural conditions, applying with like justice to all concerned.

CHAPTER XII.

BIDS for compromise now began to be heard. Offers came from railroads to enter into some arrangement which would be satisfactory to the new company. Assurances were being received in a guarded way from the minor railroads that they were themselves unwilling instruments in the hands of their big masters—the trunk lines and traffic associations,—and would hail with pleasure any alliance with the Anti-Trust Company which would insure them simply the natural business to which they were entitled, and which they declared they were not now receiving—whatever the appearances might be. Here is a sample of the replies sent from headquarters in response to such assurances:

"Your case will be looked into in common with the rest of the railroads and will be accorded the treatment deserved. If you have come near enough to obeying the laws to justify this company in permitting you to be associated with the roads of its own, eventually to be established, you shall be so treated. As individuals, the members of the Anti-Trust Company are friendly,

considerate people, but as a corporation, like every other corporation, they have no soul, and it is as a corporation they have to deal with the railroads and other corporations."

Overtures were also being received from the Standard. It wanted to enter into some arrangement for a division of territory, or to make a sale of its now clogged and crippled works and lines to the new company, or enter into some other deal. In answer to these overtures Warner suggested the following be sent to the old monopoly:

"It is somewhat tough, of course, that with all your wealth and your mammoth plants, you find yourself forced to a point where you cannot compel people to patronize you; but you should be thankful that it has taken them so long to get their eyes open to that fact. We have no quarrel with you as individuals—will be glad to have you join us as such and put all the money you please into our Monopoly of the People; but we must deal with you as a corporation in your general combinations, as we have already dealt with you in the oil business.

"It is not our business as a corporation to inquire how many millions of dollars worth of the property in your possession the operation of our company will absorb—no more than you considered it yours to do so with

that of others, ranging from manufacturers and transporters down to the tank wagon peddlers. It is wrong, of course, in any spirit of common justice to injure great concerns or small ones; but you must recollect that this is simply a matter of business. As individuals we extend an invitation to you to join our company and co-operate with us; as a corporation we extend nothing to you but the things, which will most quickly and effectively drive you out of the Trust business.

"In conclusion do you not really feel relieved to get out of the business in which you have used so many assumed names and taught the people such a valuable lesson? Is it not a relief to you to know that it cuts you loose from beneficiaries of your pay rolls whose ability to draw their salaries has outlasted the particular usefulness which first endeared them to you? But no more for the present."

Having followed the progress of the company to this point for The Middle Ten, its historian leaves it with the members of the club to do the rest—either to leave it here or follow it on in further conquests according to their own logic and fancy; not with the end in view of having everybody ultimately employed by a common company or by the state, but with the aim of broader experiment in the line of developing what the individ-

ual should be free to do and what should be done by associations of individuals; of experiment on a larger scale, industrially and commercially, in learning where the lines lie between the things which many may do unitedly with the greatest profit for each, and what each may do independently with the greatest profit to all.

OTHER PAPERS.

AMONG the other contributions offered was a rather peculiar one entitled "The Survival of the Fittest," from which the following extracts are given:

"Credited to the old Roman poet, Horace, are these lines relating to mankind:

> When these brutes, now called men, first crawled out of the ground, a dumb and dirty lot, they fought for nuts and sheltering spots, with nail and fist; then with sticks; later with arms forged of metal. Then they invented names and words. With language and thought came cities and some relief from strife.

"This is the plain, practical start old Uncle Horace has given us. If he were living to-day and could make another summary for the centuries which have since rolled away the chief changes he would be required to make would be simply changes of weapons—the old fight has been going on just the same, and the rule now, as ever, is the survival of the fittest.

"In a good many ways—well meaning enough, many of them,—people have sought along sentimental lines to build up the notion that man is more than an animal; that the brute characteristics may eventually

be weeded out of his nature and that, through restraint of the strong and assistance for the weak, mankind may ultimately become a great brotherhood—a race of brothers finding development for the noblest elements in their nature by helping the feebler members of the family and making the world happier for themselves by making it happier for others. This is all wrong. It is attempted evasion of the law of the survival of the fittest, and every effort in that line is a contribution to future woe for the race. As illustrating this, note the following extracts from a scientific standpoint."

[The quotations made were from a course of lectures on Darwinism and race progress, showing how germs of disease are benefactors of the race by killing the feeble and unsound, the healthy and vigorous usually resisting such attacks by reason of their physical fitness to survive and perpetuate their species; how, through improved methods of nursing, clothing and the use of artificially prepared food, sickly infants are helped to survive their first and most dangerous years, subsequently are artificially protected from infectious diseases and thus are permitted to live to lower the average physique of the fathers and mothers of the next generation; how class distinctions of an artificial kind are being destroyed only to be replaced by others of a most enduring kind—a kind in which the differences will become organic.]

"There you have it briefly—a little cold, to be sure, but thoroughly practical. The survival of the fittest—that is to say, of the ones most capable of surviving—is the only natural course. Guided by the force of this natural law, the large fish destroy little ones, the wolves fall upon wounded fellow members of their pack and destroy them; and thus the process goes on among the inhabitants of earth, sky and sea. Man alone makes believe not to be acting on that principle, but he is doing so just the same. Help for the weak and sickly, as we have seen, is misplaced sentiment.

"Such help but serves to increase the number of those who will require similar help in the future, and is therefore in the nature of contributing to the future lowering of the race. No such help should be extended. The vocation of the physician and nurse and others who minister to the sickly and unfortunate should be prohibited by law. They are simply artificial interferences with the natural processes of evolution in the physical world. Birds, brutes and fishes, in their natural state, do not have them and neither should man.

"People capable of surviving without them do not require such services, and those who do require them should not be permitted to survive. As it is with people physically so it is with them in all vocations. There should be no sentimenal help, no artificial bols-

tering up of those less capable than others of fighting the battle of life. The results of any efforts in that line must necessarily be detrimental to the future progress of the race. In the course of sworn testimony, a few years ago, a prominent corporation man of the middle class said: 'There is no help for any of us, but the weakest must go first.'

"That is the key to the whole matter—'the weakest must go first' in all things, and to attempt to retard their departure is to retard the natural course of progress. It is not held, that the surviving ones will be the noblest and best, but simply the ones most capable of surviving in their particular lines. The rule applies alike to the good and the bad—clergymen and thieves, scholars and ignoramuses, peaceful people and prize fighters, honest men and rascals, and all other ranks of mankind. In each the ones most capable of surviving will be the survivors.

"This being true, it is silly and not natural to attempt to maintain anything like equality of rights or equality of possessions among mankind. On this point note the following extract from a recent lengthy article in the Cleveland, O., *Leader*, taking William Dean Howells, the novelist, to task for the sentiments expressed by him in a couple of sonnets on 'Society.' The *Leader* says:

As yet we cannot believe that men a little lower and weaker than the angels will ever be made by legislation or any structure of government no more privileged or blessed with the good things of life than other men, at the opposite extreme of the race, who are only a little above the apes in powers and character. We are not able to believe in the establishment and maintenance of equality of possession and enjoyment as long as there must be enormous inequality in ability to acquire and to hold.

"The *Leader's* logic on that point is good. It is a certain fact that, as it says, there can be no 'establishment of equality of possession and enjoyment as long as there must be enormous inequality in ability to acquire and hold.' Of course there have been things which have seemed to show exceptions to this rule, but they have only been apparent—not real. For example take the city of Cleveland—its incorporation as a city. The people knew very well that until they all became alike in size, color, strength, intelligence, and in every other respect, they could not have equality in their possessions and enjoyments, and that it would therefore be out of place to consider any such equality in the regulation of their city.

"But they followed the sentimental notion that, although they were not all alike, yet by mutual concessions in framing laws or ordinances to govern them they could strike a fair general average in such, and that, whether they had come into the world as creatures to be pitied or beings to be envied, there were things

they could own and enjoy in common as long as they kept within the mutual regulations or laws. They have carried this foolish notion so far as actually to own in common fine public buildings, great systems of public improvement, beautiful parks and the general public possessions of a great city.

"The notion, moreover, has been permitted to prevail politically in the state and nation.

"The *Leader's* logic applies with the same force to equality of suffrage as to any other kind of equality. Men can no more be political equals and vote with equal intelligence and judgment than they can hold and enjoy property in common; yet the American people have not only permitted canal drivers and rail splitters to vote, the same as gentlemen of culture and leisure, but have gone to the ridiculous extreme of permitting men to advance from those common ranks to the highest office within the gift of the nation, as in the cases of Garfield and Lincoln.

"The thing is most absurd, to be sure, and the many incidental features connected with it are artificial, transitory—a temporary matter of form. By way of illustration it might be said our friend, the *Leader*, well knows that all the matter it prints will not be of the same service and significance to all who read it. Some of it necessarily will be harmful rather than

helpful by creating false impressions, false antagonisms, false ambitions, in the minds of those not intellectually capable of reaching the right conclusions from what they read; yet as a mere matter of form, in conformity with the whimsical usages of the day, it is presumed that the *Leader* is sold to anyone who has the money to buy it—regardless of the nearness of the characteristics of the purchaser either to those of the angel or the ape.

"This 'vulgarization of knowledge,' as it has been aptly termed,—its extension to all classes of people, regardless of their 'ability to acquire and hold,' as the *Leader* puts it,—is one of the absurdities growing out of the false notion that there are privileges people may have in common regardless of their individual inequality. It is too much, perhaps, to expect that the *Leader* alone may give a practical illustration of what ought to be done in this respect by requiring every man who desires a copy of the *Leader* to produce verbal or documentary proof that he has the same equality of intellectual ability 'to acquire and hold' as every other person who has been permitted to read the paper.

"But in due time these things will regulate themselves. They are doing so even now. Notwithstanding the popular government fad, the operation of the law of the survival of the fittest is going on and will eventually bring about the proper order of things—when the canal

drivers and rail splitters will remain such, and the voting, if any, and conducting of the affairs of government, will be carried on by those specially adapted to such matters.

"Various standards of survival have obtained in various ages. In the present age the standard will continue to be one of limitless business and money getting, and the winners will be the ones who, taking due care of their health, and having utter disregard for the feelings and welfare of everybody else,—yes, utter heartlessness if you choose to term it,—will pursue the dollar till they capture it, no matter through what wrongs or miseries for others the trail may lead. People have no business to be in a position to be made miserable. If they lack the ingenuity or willingness to sell a few hundred thousand dollars' worth of capitalized stock in some swindling company, laugh at the duped investors and pass on to other conquests, they have no right to complain of the man of business who makes use of such abilities and opportunities. It is a matter of the survival of the fittest. If they are too chicken-hearted to enter into conspiracies with railway managers whereby charters are violated and competitors and the public are robbed on the one hand and railroad stockholders on the other, they have no reason to complain if live business men throw no such chances over their shoulders. These

are the successful men—these are the ones who will exemplify the rule of the survival of the fittest under the improved and growing idea of business in the present age.

"By way of illustration let us go back again to the city of Cleveland. From within its limits there emanated some years ago—not from ignorant apishness or any chicken-heartedness as to popular rights and privileges, but from other grades of human development—plans for transferring, through rebate arrangements with railroad managers, the property and business of many people to a little company of individuals specially created for the purpose. The orders went forth. The fact that they reduced the richest portion of Pennsylvania to a state of panic caused the people of those regions—the oil regions—to entertain the conceited idea that neither because of their differences individually nor for any other reason should they permit the natural products and industries of their region to be taken from them and owned by the little company in another state, so excellently fitted to judge and declare how much the people of the oil regions could be permitted to possess and enjoy without hurting themselves.

"The people, in their then crude idea of the fitness of things, which regarded the welfare of each as a part

of the welfare of all, were impelled almost to the verge of revolution—classed this excellent business proceeding as a conspiracy and an outrage, repulsed its promoters and caused the abandonment of the company under the name it had taken. Had the people continued to stand together in this way either as individuals or as members of a common company—had they continued to cling to that fad idea that the welfare of each should be considered a part of the welfare of all—it would have required a long time to transfer their rights and possessions to the little band so ready and able to handle them. But the people, of course, would not do that.

"All the little band had to do was to change its name, apply its absorbing methods more gradually and bide its time. Observe the result. Step by step, wreck by wreck, purchase by purchase, traitor by traitor, dissension by dissension, interest by interest—by control of individuals, companies, press, courts and legislatures—the little band's work has gone on, piling up wealth by the hundreds of millions, until it is now directed toward putting the finishing touches on the establishment of a complete monopoly in all branches of the business in which it was once shut out as a gang of conspirators against individual rights and common commerce.

"This is what is meant by the survival of the fittest

in the development of our business age. It may not suit those who cling either to old fogy ideas as to 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,' or new fangled plans for more co-operation; but what are they going to do about it?"

MANY OR ONE?

ONE of the members of the club who had agreed in the main with the views of the member who had written the story of the Anti-Trust Company, the chief points of which they had discussed while the paper was in preparation, objected to the manner of procedure while endorsing the general sentiments. He offered a supplementary paper on the same subject, but argued that instead of moving toward the formation of a great co-operative company, on a larger scale than ever before attempted, there first should be more general experiments of that character, municipal and othewise, and that the Anti-Trust Company, or its equivalent, would be the natural outgrowth of successful operation of the smaller associations. His contribution was in part as follows:

"It is not to be supposed that people may go to the polls one day as a nation and sustain all kinds of overgrown private combines and political crookedness which they have helped to create and go another day, in another capacity, and do the reverse. If such a change

were possible a national organization might be created on short notice which would operate successfully; but with the facts plainly in view that people will not even try the experiment of more local co-operation and municipal ownership and operation of franchises they now present to private corporations, it is no more than an agreeable fiction to speak of a national company or a national government operating on that principle. People decline as yet to appreciate the fact that if they can afford to pay certain sums regularly to water, fuel, light, street railway and other private corporations they could just as well make similar payments to companies of their own or of their respective cities.

"It is the same principle as paying rent when the amount of the rent paid regularly into some substantial local building and loan association would apply on the purchase of the property and eventually pay for it. The fact that a good many cities, braving the odium of being charged with drifting toward state socialism, have established water works of their own and have found them their best paying assets, does not seem to have taught them to extend the good work to the ownership of other works of a public character; nor has their satisfactory experience served as an example to others to the extent naturally to be expected, as may be seen from the number of cities where the water

supply is still owned and sold by private corporations. They might as properly be permitted to own the sewers, the streets and city buildings and require tolls for their use.

"As for co-operative associations they should be experimented with everywhere. The value of the successful ones would more than offset all the failures, for failures there would necessarily be and many of them, as there have been in all movements. Among the associations thus successfully established there would naturally develop a fellow feeling, which would be the bond of greater co-operation and fellowship. It might be a co-operative building here, a factory there, an oil association over yonder, a coal industry somewhere else—and so on. It would be the same industrially and commercially as it has been politically—first a clearing here and there, then growing settlements, colonies and eventually states and a nation. It must be the same way with industry and commerce—only an individual interested here and there at first, then associations of individuals, then federation of associations. Why should people hesitate to make experiments of that character? Should the fact that there will be necessarily failures stand in their way? What does any system, either of government or of anything else, which exists to-day, represent but the progress of the lesson

of co-operation the world has been studying in all ages and which lesson it is still studying and still must study ?

"Singular it is, surely, that among the many associations continually springing up there are so few co-operative industrial and commercial organizations—local associations managed like the local building and loan associations already mentioned. The fact that there have been some of these loan associations in which the members have had their credulity imposed upon and have been swindled by unscrupulous men at the head of them, has not affected the principle of co-operation and economy underlying them. They have been the means of securing for thousands of people homes of their own and of saving for others what, in many cases, would have been wasted.

"It matters not that the individual goes into such a co-operation in the spirit of self-interest, for only through the common progress of the association does the interest of each of its members advance; thus while each may be said to be a unit for himself, or herself, all form a unit for the common welfare of the association. Party lines will be found to be no bar to their standing together in opposition to any policy or candidate for public office whose success will endanger their mutual interests in that association. The con-

sequent logic is that if there were enough co-operative associations of that kind in enough branches of industry and economy they would stand by each other as associations as well as individuals, and as the monopolies and trusts of to-day would be their common foe, they would be unitedly opposed and broken up.

"If such co-operative associations existed to-day in the number and variety they should, together with the municipal ownership and operation of public franchises, the monopoly of the corporation could not live; and until they have such an existence locally they need not be expected to exist nationally. But the time will come when they will so co-operate. They will be forced into it.

"What is any club, society, party, city, state or nation but the result of co-operation—incomplete necessarily, because of the incompleteness of individuals, but giving the world all it has of common order and common freedom? Necessity has forced people into this co-operation politically, in government, and is forcing them into it industrially and commercially. Commercial and industrial monarchs need not be expected to be more merciful and just than those of other kinds. The power people put into the hands of a few is better distributed among thousands. That this is so politically the people have learned, that it is so indus-

trially and commercially they are learning—learning, not voluntarily but of necessity. Let us have more co-operation. Through it will come the settlement of the money question, the tariff question and many others as well. Let us get better acquainted with our fellow travelers and organize and act mutually in matters in which we can agree—not waiting for a time which will never come—a time when in all things we will look and think and act alike.

"While making these experiments locally there are many ways in which the people may make conservative experiments as a nation along the same line. For example, they might authorize their representatives in the national law-making body to provide for the construction and operation of a number of government ships of commerce as well as of war—ships which not only should carry mails but should do freight and passenger business as well. Think what a miserably small percentage, even of the carrying trade of this country, is done by American ships! Think of our thousands of miles of sea coast—of how little their ports now represent of American shipping and of what they might represent in the future! Is it not worth while to look after this business, and is it not being foolishly neglected? In this connection note the following item from a Pittsburg, Pa., newspaper:

"Antonio Navarro, who is one of the oldest and most extensive importers and exporters of the Argentine Republic is here with A. M. Clark, his agent and interpreter, for the purpose of interesting the manufacturers of Pittsburg in the Argentine Republic as a new and flourishing market for their products. The government of the Argentine Republic, realizing that the United States has better opportunities for placing its machinery and manufactured wares in South America than England, which is at present supplying the trade, has interested itself in Mr. Navarro's visit to this country, and is giving him every encouragement in pushing the project, which it regards as being of vital importance to the development of its country. Said Mr. Navarro last night; "The Argentine Republic has been receiving little or nothing from the United States in the way of manufactured products. England has availed itself of the rich market, and has been enjoying it almost exclusively, although American manufacturers can place their goods in the South American markets at a much less cost than Great Britain. We regard Pittsburg as one of the most important manufacturing cities in the world, and our government, is especially anxious to acquaint the manufacturers of this city with the wonderful resources of its lands. The demand for machinery is increasing every day, and we are anxious to interest the Pittsburg manufacturers, as we appreciate the superiority of their products over those sent to us by England."

"There is material for a whole political campaign in that one item. What it says of the Argentine Republic is true in some degree not only of other countries of South America but of the Eastern World as well. It speaks of the still undeveloped reciprocity policy of James G. Blaine—the only natural and just policy among nations as among individuals. Would it not be a great step in that direction to have government ownership of mail ships, carrying also freight, and

carrying it with no more discrimination between shippers than in carrying their letters, papers and other matter transmitted through the mails?

"England stimulates, if it does not maintain, its shipping trade by means of subsidies. The principle of the subsidy is that no private monopoly can profit from such without benefitting, in some measure, the people who have been taxed to furnish the subsidy. Do these benefits to the people offset the private use and abuse of power which the subsidies foster? Some of our statesmen think they do, and in consequence the United States is now making a present of millions of dollars (throwing in a mail monopoly as well) to a steamship company in which capital is invested of a combine that has built up a mighty monopoly on the land, and evidently seeks now to establish another on the sea.

"No, the subsidizing of individuals or private monopolies is not what is wanted either on land or water. Instead of subsidizing steamship companies let the government construct and operate ships of its own, with like rates for everybody for like service. Is it more dangerous to popular rights to have such large interests developed, owned and operated by the representatives of the people—the government—than to have them in the hands of a comparatively few men with the power to use them to suit themselves?

"Those who will so argue and punctuate their arguments with frequent grave allusions to 'paternalism,' will also argue that the postal business of the United States should not be conducted by the government, but rather by some such enterprising private organization as the Standard Oil Trust, or some mining, railroad or other monopoly. No such argument should be permitted to stand in the way of experiment with government ships of peace as well as ships of war.

"In the meantime there should be an increase everywhere in the number and variety of local experiments in co-operation. They will have their failures, as all systems and associations of effort have had them, through at least 6,000 years; but they will win in the end, or civilization itself will fail."

SONG OF THE TRUST.

THE poem selected as best representing the sentiments of the club was as follows:

Behold how the envious roll their eyes at the prizes they fail to win,
And groan while the pace they help to set is pushing the leaders in;
Behold what a lot of dust they raise—what hubbub throughout the land—
When seeing their own ideals filled, they follow and not command.

But little we need to heed their dust so long as its source is thus—
So long as they make their own chief aim the feature they curse in us;
So long as they think and feel and act that the only pursuit of man—
To which all others are side pursuits—is to gobble the most he can.

We are only the fruits of a system built on the common greed of man,
And have nothing to fear from the ones who squirm, yet cherish themselves the plan;
For we know that a touch of our golden wand will hush the noisy to sleep—

That the coin of the realm will gather them in, as the salt will gather the sheep.

Our guide is—that the Business Age lays sentiment on the shelf,
And we simply lead in the greedy race of every man for himself;
We recognize that the greatest rule the ethics of man has touched
Is now our civilization's boast and is, "Either clutch or be clutched."

And yet, as a rule, do we not pay well for whatever we need to buy—
Whether such be a governor, jury or judge, detective, traitor or spy?
And even the votes of the common herd—how large they swell the amount
Our expensive political heelers charge in their bills to expense account!

The Senate, House and Cabinet stuff we often require comes high,
While Legislatures, though cheap themselves, are bothersome things to buy;
And the writers and pastors, here and there, by whom our thrift is praised,
Have things to be built and trips to take and salaries to be raised.

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Think furthermore of the pile it takes to pay for the unripe fruits
Our papers yield us from time to time in the matter of libel suits;
And think of the handsome sum required to foot the annual bill

Involved in raiding presumptuous plants we issue orders to kill.

Pass over—but no; let the list go in—the meanest list of them all;
For its members never a sale too mean and never a deal too small;
'Twould please us much if our pay roll lists their names no longer could know,
But like the fellow who grappled the bear, we dare not let them go.

And these are only a paltry few of the items we have to pay
In harnessing individual greed in an organized modern way;
Our wages are good and are promptly paid—to even the spying bums,
And our regular dividend—come it must, no matter from where it comes.

It matters not that along the way it fattens where someone gropes
Among the wreckage our work has made, and is left with his blasted hopes;
Depression, disorder and debt may spread at a touch of our cornering thumb,
But the dividend fixed for our watered stock has nothing to do but come.

Thus turning the screws our grist is ground, and we laugh at the noise we hear,
For the middle classes will not unite, and the others we need not fear;
And so long as man thinks little as now of his fellow worm of the dust,
Ourselves or others will turn the screws and sing the Song of the Trust.

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